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Third Draft

SPACE FOR PEACE

Proclamation for the Peace Forum of the Ecumenical Association of
Academies and Lay Centres in Europe. Driebergen, September 1987

Preamble:

The deployment of the Pershing II missiles was imminent. The protest
against it in our societies had reached its climax. It was in this
situation that the Ecumenical Association of Academies and Lay Centres
in Europe at its Annual Conference in Järvenpää (Finland) in September
1983 passed the Statement: Taking Risks for Peace in Europe. Its message
is valid for us to this date. At that time we reached an important point
of understanding among ourselves. Despite the differences of our
political, economic and cultural backgrounds, despite our different
denominational beliefs we were able to consent to an all-European
process of learning in order to bring about peace.

This affected us and our centres. The establishment of internationally
composed regional peace forums followed in the wake of this statement.
Consultations in Meißen, Berlin and Prague encouraged us to pursue the
perspective of common security. In hundreds of events and meetings in
our centres and academies we endeavoured to contribute in our specific
way to the enormous efforts of opposing the escalating arms build-up.

Where do we stand today?

The missiles are stationed. Now efforts are to be made in order to
negotiate for their withdrawal. Yet, in the research laboratories the
next steps for an arms build-up are being prepared for. Nuclear,
chemical and probably also bio-genetic weapons of destruction,
militarisation of space, military data and communication technologies
obligate and eat up intellectual and material resources which could
otherwise be used to bring about a living conditions where more justice
and more peace prevails and where creation is being sustained. The way
to the danger of a global holocaust is being paved.

At the same time, the proposals meanwhile submitted and the negotiations
of the Soviet Union and the USA in Reykjavik have caused the political
perspective of a conversion from the escalation of squander and fear to
be very close at hand. However, the decisive break-through is blocked by
the one-sided option for a technological supremacy of militarization in
space.

The disasters of Harrisburg and Chernobyl, Bophal and Basle have made it
clear that the risk-technologies threaten to surpass human control even
in the civil realm. The sense of danger is becoming more acute. But
still, the majorities seem to accept concepts leading to more risks and
increasing arms production rather than to have confidence in

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alternatives entailing less risks and reducing arms production. Civil disobedience, protest and resistance come into conflict with the state monopoly of power. Alternative actions only slowly and erratically turn into politically accepted and workable concepts of action.

We find ourselves in a state of "discursus", of running to and fro between a new orientation which we all need and one-sided patterns of thought and action determined by power and interests.

Justice as a challenge for peace and integrity of creation

As Christians we subscribe to the promise of the alternative which raises up the powerless and casts down the mighty from their seats. It challenges us to engage in actions for justice, peace and integrity of creation even at times when we have failed. The connivance of the system of nuclear deterrence by the industrialized countries of the North reveals itself to be such a failure. This system cannot be grounded on anything which we believe in, nor on anything we avow. It is in contradiction to what we should testify as gospel.

Some churches like the Reformed Church in the Netherlands have recognized this at an early stage. Yet, in 1959 the Heidelberg Theses stated that the "church ... had to recognize the attempt at securing peace in freedom through the existence of nuclear weapons as a Christian pattern of conduct which may just pass." (From: Frieden wahren, fördern und erneuern. Denkschrift der EKD, Gütersloh 1981, p. 83).

But now many are convinced that "time is running short". For the sake of peace "the Christian churches in their common responsibility have to say a word which mankind cannot ignore" (Appeal on the occasion of the 21st Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchentag 1985).

In view of our European history of violence, for us this can only be a word of repentance. Otherwise we will miss the chance of conversion. And therefore it has to be a word which is not suppressing the interrelatedness of justice, peace and integrity of creation. During the last years this relationship has become the central issue in all our churches:

"The clear contradiction between the wasteful overproduction of weapons and the amount of basic needs not satisfied (developing countries and marginal groups and the poor in prosperous societies) is ... an aggression on those who are its victims. An aggression leading to crime: Even if the weapons are not used, they are killing the poor by their mere costliness for they condemn them to death by hunger." (The Holy Seat and Disarmament, dec. 12, 1976).

"While many factors are involved, the link between the arms race and economic development, the effects of rising defence budgets and accelerated reliance on arms production in the industrialized nations, and the ensuing strain on the international system as a whole pose special threats to peace and justice....."



We believe that the time has come when the churches must unequivocally declare that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity..." (Statement on Peace and Justice, 6th Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Vancouver 1983)

"The policy of deterrent is ... criminal because it represents the very motive for the arms race with all its consequences: the crazy inhuman wasting of resources both natural and material, of human and intellectual resources.... While it exacts ever more sacrifices such a policy also entails the exploitation of all kinds of resources of the developing countries which they would urgently need to satisfy their dire needs as well as for the social and economic progress of their societies." (Russian-Orthodox Message on the Issue of War and Peace in a Nuclear Age, Moscow, Febr. 7th, 1986).

We still do not know whether we will ever have that common word which mankind cannot ignore. However, we have embarked on a movement of quest, on a conciliar process for justice, peace and integrity of creation.

The conciliar process: Bringing to birth the alternative

The vision of the OIKUMENE compels us to embrace an attitude in our belief, in our way of living and thinking which enables us to grasp anew our own OIKOS, our own household in the context of the responsibility for the whole, inhabited world.

The assessment of problems in the various regions of the earth is different because we are affected in different ways. All of us know that military and civil risk technologies, destruction of nature and wasteful use of resources meanwhile threaten our existence. But as Christians we find ourselves at the side of the beneficiaries and the exploited, the mighty and the powerless. We are not responsible for the present state of the world to the same degree.

This refers us Europeans back to our own history. Attitudes of thought and action which spread in the last centuries through our system of economy, through our cultural dominance, through the use of force and violence, are today characterizing the structure of international relations. Any reorientation evading this issue for the sake of safeguarding our own privileges has forfeited the possibility of conversion. Any reorientation which does not want to find out in which way we have to change in order for dependency to turn to partnership, dominance to dialogue, forced regulations to sovereign responsibility and egoism to participation, will have missed the Kairos of the call for justice. It is only where this call is heard that the dimension of peace will unfold. Justice alone can bring about reconciliation.

Against aspects of dominance and force in European history we have to realize in practical terms that we are trustees and not masters of creation. Consideration for the essentials of life and enabling conditions of social justice are the touchstones in which the Old Testament finds proof of faithful obedience to God and according to



which it promises shalom. By heeding these "statutes and ordinances" we have his promise "that you will dwell in the land securely" (Leviticus 25).

Against the remaining risk of the heresy of the secular tower of Babel we are referred to the pragmatic plans the Bible has in store for our lives. By confessing the truth of the Gospel we are able to regain the clarity for our actions.

The *pax romana* as an expression of the secular rule finds its equivalent in the New Testament in the peace of God. It finds its expression in love permeating human's life embracing our neighbour as well as our enemy. It is the central criterion for the fulfilment of the law. The Christian alternative to the political culture of violence is a culture of love.

The road from violence to love leads through repentance and atonement. It leads to a new relationship to the world freeing us from the self-imposed constraint wanting to control and dominate everything. It exchanges the make-believe of security which power pretends to offer for the security emerging from confidence.

The conversion from the self-righteousness of human power brings about justice among ourselves. To practice this kind of conversion can protect us from provoking irrevocable consequences of military and civil risk technologies. Forgiveness leads us away from sin to new, acceptable and verifiable patterns of life. Love seen as partaking of the mercy and grace of God sets us free to share the goods which we keep back from others. It is with these experiences in mind that we want to reorientate our work and our lives.

Security partnership and European peace order

We understand security partnership to be a concept of new thought forms in which the potential enemy becomes a partner for common security. In view of the threat by nuclear, chemical and biological means of mass destruction it is a prerequisite to our common survival. As an instrument materially verifiable and vested by international law it aims at the guaranteed non-aggressiveness of both sides. It replaces armament control by disarmament. Security partnership is a concept beyond deterrence. It leads away from the fear to be under the threat of violence to a confidence in the other side's intention to keep peace. This concept does not require the abolition of antagonistic systems and ideological differences. It does not exclude conflicts resulting from these differences. But it contains them below the brink of armed conflict. It enables peaceful coexistence.

We want to understand security partnership as a concept showing the way to a European peace order. Apart from the aspects of peace policy it also embraces aspects of economic, ecological and cultural relations as well as the issue of human rights in Europe.

The more clearly and the more confidently the all-European perspective of common security can be articulated the more obvious it will be that the ideology of deterrence cannot really be legitimized.

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro



1. The ongoing work of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe essentially contains all elements of such a European peace order. The question is which priority the European States give to this process and the practical realization of its results. It does not advance the cause if we only see in it another level of negotiations among others. As long as all-European efforts in peace policies do not centre around the CSCE process the most important chance to jointly formulate and practice security partnership is forfeited.

We therefore think it most important to aim at widening and strengthening the scope of activity within the CSCE process in the interest of an independent all-European perspective.

2. Space for peace can only take shape by setting successful examples of cooperation beyond specific systems. We can realistically assume that the antagonisms inherent in the systems between East and West will influence the international relationships for yet some time. The big powers can only develop a common concern when the survival of all of us is at stake. Yet, we think it is important that regionally new areas of activities are explored in order to anticipate and test a more comprehensive understanding of security partnership. (e.g. the initiative for a zone free from chemical weapons).

The neutral and non-aligned states of Europe have played a constructive and forward looking role as mediators between the blocs during the past years. Their proposals for nuclear free and demilitarized zones, their proposals for measures of confidence-building and reduction of troops have to be adopted more consequently and bear fruits in the negotiations.

3. We are still far from practicing the recognition of basic equality in international relationships. We therefore strongly object to any tendencies to relax rules of international law thus undermining the confidence in the reliability of international agreements. Confidence building measures reaching across frontiers are greatly hampered by these.

Therefore, the CSCE process has to be taken advantage of in order to regain confidence. The ratification of results achieved through negotiations by European countries would be able to put more weight on the mutually agreed commitments. Bi-lateral agreements in the wake of this process should orientate themselves towards it so that the complexities of the agreements become more transparent and can be understood in their context.

Attempts have to be made in order to streamline the CSCE process in such a way that an integrative concept of negotiations emerges through which the different problem areas such as disarmament, economy, ecology, culture and human rights relate to each other. Cooperation in specific areas based on confidence can thus have positive effects on other problem areas, too. From this point of view it is necessary to verify whether any unilateral West European (EC) or East European (COMECON) process of integration will hamper or advance an all-European perspective.



Europe facing the challenge of justice

On the pragmatic and political level the interrelation between the military build-up and underdevelopment is being dealt with as if it did not exist at all. As far as proposals for disarmament reach the conference tables or as far as the world economic order is discussed not one single practical approach can be detected reflecting on both in their interrelatedness. The preponderance of the West-East conflict has spared the industrialized states of the North as it were from following up their colonial past and its aftermath. This is basically the reason why concepts for disarmament in the West-East relationship did not link up with concepts for a just distribution of wealth in the North-South relationship.

To comprehend the issue of justice in the rich industrialized states of the north and in the majority of the world's population in the nations of the South which are kept in a state of underdevelopment as a challenge to our understanding of security so far based on deterrence and arms build-up, would mean to reverse the prevailing awareness in our countries. A genuine contribution on the part of the Europeans to justice and peace requires no less.

Especially in those cases where the interest payments of highly indebted developing countries help to finance armament programmes in Western nations the connection between armament and underdevelopment becomes evident. Only the kind of disarmament which enables both a redemption of debts and an equalization of burdens in the North-South relations will promote justice.

The world-wide North-South conflict is reflected within Europe itself. Social and regional discrimination can be found within and among our countries. Centralization and the ensuing tendencies towards a levelling process in the capitalist societies on national and supranational level (such as in the government controlled agrarian sector but also through supranational company strategies) lead to an overproduction on the one side and to the loss of jobs for gainful employment and to a new poverty on the other side. The concentration of capital input in banks and in certain sectors of the economy goes along with a restriction of social benefit schemes.

First signs of decentralization of economic and political responsibility in the socialist countries and procedures of redistribution from the military to the civil sector as well as technological modernisation are hampered by the heavy burden of armament expenditure.

The issue of human rights in Europe cannot only be seen from the angle of civil rights, but it must be understood in the first place from the aspect of economic and social equality as well as that of cultural identity.

Economic cooperation in Europe therefore needs to be qualified in terms of a just exchange both among the industrialized centres in West and East as well as in relation to the regionally and socially underprivileged periphery. Economic units appropriately equipped and more adjusted to regional needs could counteract tendencies towards



standardization through a European equalization of burdens in terms of finances as well as maintain and promote their cultural identity.

The reversal of the tourist streams to the South is the migration from those regions which are at a disadvantage to the centres of economic prosperity. This migration is confronted by massive restrictions accompanied by xenophobia and nationalistic egotism. To overcome the economic disparities being the most important reason for migration is the prerequisite to freedom of movement in Europe.

Continued arms build-up is a serious obstruction to this equalization of burdens among the various regions in Europe. The mentality of deterrence permeates political thought and action not only in the military sector. The attitude towards asylum seekers is just one case in point.

In order to bring about changes on a global scale and in favour of the poor we have to change mentalities and structures in our own lives to begin with. This is the reason why we want to be instrumental in strengthening and promoting experiences conceiving a vision of a Europe which breaks up and relaxes dependencies in favour of autonomous developments, a Europe which does not level cultural differences but which sees them as an enrichment, a Europe which does not provoke social polarizations but which facilitates social equality, a Europe which realizes that just distribution is the prerequisite for detente and confidence.

Integration of Europe and integrity of creation

The problems of the destruction of nature have long ago crossed the national borders and national politics can, therefore, only in a limited way deal with them. They have become a danger to an extent that they do not come short of the nuclear threat. The habitableness of the earth is at stake.

It is appalling to realize that national and international instruments of cooperation to ward off acute and long-term dangers have been lagging behind. Conservation of water, of air and soil, the transformation of woodland into steppe and the barrenness of landscapes, climatic changes and the destruction of the atmosphere, wasteful use of resources and avoiding the use of or taking care of a safe disposal of toxic and nuclear waste, all these issues are calling for international agreements. The replacement of enormously risky large-scale technologies by environment-oriented and energy-saving procedures and methods of production needs to be negotiated on the international level and has to rely on the transfer of appropriate technological developments. New dependencies like for instance in the agricultural sector through centralized, bio-technological and biogenetic manipulation of species in relation to chemical fertilizers and insecticides have meanwhile been structurally cemented reaching the remotest corner of the earth.

In view of these problems we have to recognize and cope with the challenge of an environment-oriented conversion of the industrial system beyond frontiers and alignments in order to safeguard the natural



work among churches
in the ecological field

environment we have in common. Even if no agreement can be reached between capitalist and socialist states concerning the social effects and aims of our economies, the destructive effects they have on our natural environment are threatening both of us just as the nuclear holocaust does. Leaving aside all other differences and antagonisms, we cannot discharge ourselves from the common responsibility for the integrity of creation.

For this very reason there is a broad scope of cooperation in Europe prompting us to common actions in the face of these urgent problems.

Human rights and international law need to be supplemented by an international environment law in order to protect mankind from the destruction of their natural environment. To think in terms of such a perspective and to put it into practice would not only be in line with the European tradition of enlightenment, but it would be needed in the interest of our common survival.

Proposals which we stand for.

The reflections so far are characterized by the vision of a Europe which after centuries of conquests, exploitation and force, could become a paragon of peaceful coexistence of peoples, just distribution of wealth and opportunities as well as esteem for creation. We know that this vision remains Utopia as long as no politically workable concepts of reshaping structures and relations will emerge from it. This is why as early as in Järvenpää we have endorsed a number of proposals which seemed workable to us in terms of policy making, even though - at the time - they may not have been able to make a headway (a political breakthrough)

We want to update and supplement these proposals. We will continue to ponder on them and to disseminate them in our meetings even if their political breakthrough does not seem to be tangible.

These proposals start with the problem which at present paralyzes Europe's common scope of action most, i.e. the escalating armament. Without a conversion of the underlying mentality, without a reduction of the financial means wasted on it, without the diversion of research capacities geared to it no substantial progress will be made in other areas. This is why we focus our proposals on this problem, being fully aware of the fact that this is but a section of what we in the oikumene have to stand for.

→ Being aware of the interrelatedness of the various problem areas we join in the call for an international development fund to be fed by the reduction of military budgets and military aid. It has to serve the international equalization of burdens, i.e. the clearance of debts of the developing countries, the promotion of regional economic units and self-help projects. This also implies projects of recultivation and reafforestation as well as autonomous information systems in the Third World. This Fund should basically be administered by the countries concerned.



At the same time we call upon the European states to set up an all-European Development Fund within the CSCE process enabling the following actions to be carried out and extending beyond frontiers: research in the field of environment-oriented conversion of the industrial system, for non-polluting technologies and products, energy saving, regional development and programmes for a just distribution of work and income in Europe.

With regard to the area confined to disarmament policies we renew and endorse the following perspectives:

- We support the demand for a world-wide renunciation of the "first use" of nuclear weapons. Even if there were no confidence in such an agreement it would still clearly point out that the use of nuclear weapons is a crime and that strategic concepts based on it can no longer be adhered to.
- We appreciate proposals with regard to reduction and abolition of nuclear weapons conceivable by the year 2000 and which could be negotiated and realized on a verifiable basis. Should interim steps be necessary they should genuinely be aiming at disarmament and not only at arms control, in other words, they should lead to an actual reduction of the weapons arsenals.
- We protest against and oppose any militarization of space. Those wishing to achieve complete nuclear disarmament do not need any defence systems against nuclear weapons. In terms of military strategy they are only useful if the option of a "first-strike" still exists. They entail economic squander and a state of international insecurity.
- We stand for the prohibition of development, production, deployment and use of chemical and biological weapons. In such a development we see the precept of human dignity perverted as well as an attack on God's creation and we condemn the psychic deformations underlying these thoughts and actions.
- As a first important step of reversal we would appreciate an international, globally valid test ban for nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. In the field of nuclear weapons the Soviet Union has taken up the first initiative to which we pay respect. Not to follow suit would amount to being untrustworthy. A general test ban is the essential prerequisite to a freeze with regard to further developments of mass destruction weapons.
- We stand for a reduction of conventional weapons in Europe and for a reorientation to defensive systems in the conventional field. It is a mere allegation to say that nuclear disarmament would lead to conventional armament.
- We stand for a worldwide prohibition of the arms trade. In view of hunger and poverty it is an unjustifiable scandal that worldwide expenditure for weapons and military aid by far exceeds expenditure for development.



Things we want to do

We understand our work during the following years as a contribution to the conciliar process for justice, peace and integrity of creation. As Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox academies and lay centres in Europe we are prepared to function as forums for the continuation of this process and to offer our commitment and our abilities in this respect.

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- We request the Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches to agree to a shared responsibility for the conciliar process. Problems of different traditions, confessions and of hierarchy pale into insignificance compared to the dangers in which we find ourselves.
 - Together with the regional Associations of centres in Africa, Asia and America we shall meet at the world consultation in Japan in November 1987 in order to agree on and to adjust the guidelines for our common commitment and to relate the manifold activities to each other.
 - We are offering our cooperation to the Conference of European Churches and the European Bishop's Conference for the preparation of the envisaged assembly of churches of the CSCE signatory states in 1988.
 - We are prepared to work with all those groups, institutions and individuals engaged in this process within the scope of our possibilities.

Through the common perspective which evolved since Järvenpää the cooperation of centres within the Ecumenical Association has intensified and enjoyed continuity.

- The series of consultations and reciprocal visits between west and east European colleagues, both male and female, are to be continued and intensified. We are planning to hold the Annual Conference in Hungary in 1988 at which we want to try to further promote the European perspective of the conciliar process.
- At the same time we intend to take up the North-South issue in Europe more thoroughly in our meetings and projects. A special consultation will prepare for this task.
- In the autonomous organisation of regional peace forums we see a model for peace work reaching out across frontiers as well as an essential objective for ecumenical learning. These peace forums shall be extended beyond the Association, they shall be open for all interested people and be shaped into an instrument continuously accompanying the conciliar process.
- The conference work in the academies and centres throws light on the manifold aspects and relationships of the conciliar process in which we and our churches are standing. Against tendencies to ward off these issues in the public discussion we insist on allowing all those groups and opinions to be heard which propagate genuine disarmament initiatives, international and social justice and the protection of



our natural environment against initiated and structural intercensal estimates of the status quo put up with.

At many meetings and joint activities we have made the encouraging experience that a comprehensive understanding of peace, that shalom - peace incorporating justice and an attitude compatible with creation - is growing among us. Therefore we cling to the hope of a common future in Europe and to the ecumenical vision to overcome the powers of destruction, oppression and poverty. In doing so we put our trust in Him who, facing death, said: "The kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

Bad Boll, March 1987

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